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from the Mosaic law of works, he does not think of the Christian as free from all law. Yet, in the latter statement at least, our dissent concerns expression rather than meaning. Professor Gilbert does not find that Paul teaches a new nomism; he distinctly recognizes the new life of the believer as the heart of Paulinism, and traces its relations with characteristic clearness. Only occasionally does he seem to have been swayed by the peculiar temptation of biblical theologians, viz., the desire to discover what is today tenable rather than what the writer actually may have thought. His discussion of the book of Hebrews is full and helpful, though again without any question of the precise time of its composition, and therefore of its situation in the general development of Christian thought. The most elaborate treatment of the book, next to that of the thought of Paul, is that of the Apocalypse, which Professor Gilbert holds to be a discussion of the parousia of the Christ. His interpretation of the book is essentially eschatological, although he discovers Rome in the woman sitting on the seven mountains. Disregarding the critical questions concerning the integrity of the book, he regards it as a literary unit, in which is portrayed the conflict between Christians and their enemies and the consequent triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Taken all together it would be difficult to find a clearer presentation of the content of the different books of the New Testament, or one in which there is less effort to prove any particular thesis. Professor Gilbert, as has been noted, is still consistent with his *Revelation of Jesus* on the point of the ideal preëxistence of Christ, but this as a question of exegesis based upon the Jewish doctrine of the idea of preëxistence of the Messiah. For a work on biblical theology the volume is astonishingly free from critical vagaries, and it would be hard to find a book in which radicalism of any sort is less manifest. It is all but impossible to find Professor Gilbert even in the attitude of advocate. That so sane and scholarly and neutral a study should have been considered as a destroyer of the faith is perplexing.

S. M.

Christian Life and Theology; or, The Contribution of Christian Experience to the System of Evangelical Doctrine. By FRANK HUGH FOSTER, PH.D., D.D. Chicago and New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1900. Pp. 286. \$1.50.

The task which the author sets for himself is to develop the essential doctrines of evangelical Christianity from the starting-point of

Christian experience. The ultimate element of Christian experience he finds in the permanent choice of duty as such. The world is viewed as a kingdom of evil, devoid of power to originate such moral action in man. By a process of elimination it appears that neither the mere power of choice, nor an evolutionary process resulting in a utilitarian morality, nor the sinner himself, can be regarded as the originating cause of the ultimate choice of duty. That cause is to be found in an objective power, personal, holy, benevolent, infinite. Thus there arises out of Christian experience the doctrine of God and the new birth. But this abstract conception of the matter is resolvable into something more concrete; the ultimate choice of duty for the Christian believer is a choice of Christ as the embodiment of the divine qualities which move us to choose. Thus conversion, or that inner response of the soul by which it passes from a sense of guilt and condemnation and inner conflict into an experience of peace and a sense of forgiveness, yields a doctrine of the person of Christ. These effects in the soul, being the proper fruits of divine action, and arising out of this transaction with Christ, lead to the inference that Christ is God. As the sense of forgiveness is the subjective side of justification, the latter doctrine is also deduced.

The above is the briefest kind of summary of the argument of one or two chapters, and one hesitates to offer it lest injustice be done to the reasoning of the author. It serves, however, to indicate the method pursued in the book. Other doctrines dealt with are those relating to the Scriptures, the work of Christ, and the church. The author exhibits wisdom and dialectical skill in thus limiting himself to a few vital doctrines. He is careful also to discriminate between greater and less degrees of probability in the conclusions reached.

It is both easy and difficult to prove what we already know. Logic must stand out in sharp outline in order that we may be sure we now reach our conclusion by its aid, as well as by way of experience. The author is not equally clear at all points in forging his chain of reasoning, and yet in his chief contentions he has maintained his positions. The author gives as the three presuppositions underlying his discussion the following: (1) "Consciousness is a reliable source of knowledge;" (2) "Any man by knowing himself knows men in general;" (3) "The consciousness of the Christian will differ from that of other men only in its objects, not in its nature." The chemist with his special field is cited as a parallel case. The first two of these cannot be gainsaid, but is the third quite true? It is true only in

the sense that religious experience does not change a man's mental constitution, and hence leaves him in this respect as other men. But the reflex working of the object contemplated, viz., God, introduces an element into Christian consciousness which is unlike that of the chemist, as he studies the phenomena of chemistry, to use the author's illustration. The failure of the third presupposition does not invalidate the argument of the book, but it does weaken the force of its appeal to all those outside the pale of Christian experience. In the nature of the case, however, such an argument will appeal most powerfully to Christian believers, though also challenging, in the most striking way, the attention of others.

Dr. Foster has made a valuable contribution to the theology of Christian experience, and his book, along with that of the late Dr. Stearns, forms an excellent foundation for what, it is to be hoped, may become an extensive literature of the subject in English. The German books on the theme are comparatively few, and, of course, inaccessible to the ordinary English reader.

The chief value of Dr. Foster's book, in the estimation of this writer, is as an apologetic, which accurately defines the phenomena of Christian experience and shows that these are susceptible of scientific treatment. The appeal of Christianity to an age so much in love with the philosophy of positivism can be made most powerful only as its solidly empirical elements are set forth. These have never been doubted by believers themselves, but to define them carefully and to bring them under accurate scientific treatment is a long step toward securing from scientific men the recognition which Christianity demands as a phenomenon of history.

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History, Prophecy, and the Monuments ; or, Israel and the Nations.

By JAMES FREDERICK McCURDY, PH.D., LL.D. Vol. I, to the downfall of Samaria, third edition, revised throughout ; Vol. II, to the fall of Nineveh, second edition ; Vol. III, completing the work. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1897-1901. Per volume, \$3.

At last this monumental work is completed. The first volume appeared in its first edition in 1894. A third and revised edition bears the date 1898. The second volume followed in 1896, and a second edition of it was called for in 1897. And now in 1901 we have